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Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2063 (2012), by which the Council requested me to continue reporting every 90 days on progress in the implementation of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The report includes an update on the situation in Darfur covering the period between 1 January and 31 March 2013. It also includes, in paragraphs 68 to 71, an assessment of developments against the updated benchmarks and indicators contained in my report to the Council of 16 October 2012 (S/2012/771, annex I).

II. Political developments

Implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur

2. During the reporting period, the signatory parties to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), continued to work towards its implementation. This was primarily true with regard to the provisions related to wealth-sharing and preparations for a donor conference.

3. On 16 January, the Darfur Regional Authority Council, the legislative body of the Darfur Regional Authority created under the Doha Document, was inaugurated in Nyala, Southern Darfur. As reflected in my previous report on UNAMID, dated 10 January 2013 (S/2013/22), the Council was established and its members appointed through a Government decree issued on 14 October 2012. At the inauguration ceremony, First Vice-President Ali Osman Taha announced that the national parliament had approved the transfer of the first tranche of funds for reconstruction and development from the Government to the Darfur Regional Authority as provided for in the Doha Document. Later that month, the Ministry of Finance provided a letter of credit to the Darfur Regional Authority for 800 million Sudanese pounds (US$ 165 million). It was not until 20 March, however, when the Darfur Regional Authority, the Ministry of Finance and the Omdurman National Bank reached agreement on who would service the interest payments on the underlying loan that the funds reportedly became available for disbursement on a

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project-by-project basis. According to the arrangement, the Darfur Regional Authority and the Ministry of Finance will make the interest payments jointly.

4. The Darfur Regional Authority and international partners completed the Darfur Joint Assessment Mission, the assessment initiated in May 2012 of the region's economic recovery, development and poverty eradication needs. That mission's findings are set out in a Darfur development strategy that was made available online (http://darfurconference.com/DDS) in early March. The strategy sets out a sequenced, coordinated and holistic plan for equitable, sustainable and participatory development. It provided the framework through which donor support for recovery and development was requested at a conference in Doha, on 7 and 8 April, at which $3.6 billion was pledged, $2 billion by the Government of the Sudan.

5. With regard to the justice provisions of the Doha Document, the Special Prosecutor for Darfur continued to investigate gross violations of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law. On 24 February, the trial of six Popular Defence Forces soldiers accused of killing a community leader in Abu Zereiga (36 km south of El Fasher, Northern Darfur) on 5 June 2011, which was investigated by the Special Prosecutor in 2012, concluded at the El Fasher General Court. All six of the accused were found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to death. UNAMID continues to protest the sentence of capital punishment. Among the other cases currently under investigation by the Special Prosecutor are attacks by militia on internally displaced persons in and around Kutum, Northern Darfur, in August and September 2012.

6. Notwithstanding the activities noted above, the implementation of the bulk of the provisions of the Doha Document continued to lag significantly behind the implementation timeline, including those related to the ceasefire and final security arrangements. An impasse between the signatory parties over the results of the verification of LJM soldiers conducted from 5 to 9 March 2012 continued to hinder progress in this regard. The agreement reached between the parties at a Joint Commission meeting, on 15 October 2012, to verify additional LJM combatants and conduct a desk review of the entire verification exercise by 15 November 2012 remained unimplemented. While UNAMID continued to urge the parties to advance the process, they remained unable to reach agreement on the results of the verification.

7. UNAMID and the United Nations country team continued to assist the Government of the Sudan and LJM in the implementation of the Doha Document. In the context of the integrated strategic framework for United Nations system-wide support to the parties, the Mission and the United Nations country team met on 19 February to review proposals for projects intended to assist in the implementation of the Doha Document. Participants approved the implementation of three joint UNAMID and United Nations country team initiatives, which involve the rehabilitation of water points along transhumance routes in Western and Central Darfur in order to mitigate conflict between nomadic pastoralists and farmers; the provision of technical training for staff of the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission in Nyala; and on-the-job training in construction for youth at various locations throughout Darfur. UNAMID will provide logistical and technical assistance to the Darfur Regional Authority in support of the projects, while the United Nations country team will provide funding and additional technical support.

Implementation is scheduled to begin in May and to take up to nine months to complete.

Negotiations towards an inclusive peace agreement

8. During the reporting period, negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)-Sudan, a faction led by Mohamed Bashar, led to the signing of an agreement to adopt the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. From 10 to 14 January, the African Union and United Nations Joint Mediation, in conjunction with the Government of the State of Qatar, conducted workshops in Doha on negotiation skills and the provisions of the Doha Document for 36 members of the JEM-Sudan delegation. Talks between the parties, mediated by the Joint Chief Mediator ad interim, Aichatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, then resumed on 20 January. These led, on 24 January, to the adoption of an agenda for negotiations, according to which the parties committed to negotiate without contradicting the provisions of the Doha Document over issues related to power-sharing, wealth-sharing, security arrangements, compensation, justice, reconciliation and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

9. On 10 February, the parties signed a ceasefire agreement, according to which they committed to, among other things, cease hostilities, violence or intimidation directed against the civilian population and refrain from offensive military action against each other. The agreement utilizes the ceasefire monitoring mechanisms and procedures established under the Doha Document. Six weeks later, on 24 March, the parties initialled an agreement between the Government of the Sudan and JEM-Sudan on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, according to which they committed to fully implement the provisions of the Doha Document and several additional measures. The additional commitments include, inter alia, the establishment of a Darfur herders and nomads council to address the specific development needs of nomadic pastoralists and the creation of a social welfare fund under the Darfur Regional Authority to enhance support to conflict-affected communities. Negotiations between the parties then concluded on 29 March with the adoption of a protocol agreement on the political participation of JEM-Sudan in the Government and the integration of its forces into the military.

Internal Darfur dialogue on the peace process

10. The Darfur Regional Authority, in conjunction with UNAMID and other partners, continued to increase the inclusiveness of the peace process among civil society and other Darfuri stakeholders. On 25 and 26 March, the body held a conference in Nyala on the security and development needs of displaced persons for approximately 1,070 participants, including 360 internally displaced persons, 200 civil society organizations members, 115 Government officials and 50 refugees. Discussions focused mainly on the role of security, access to land, intercommunal relations and access to social services in creating conditions conducive to the return or resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees. Participants recommended, in this regard, the deployment of additional police to rural areas, increased community policing, the disarmament of militias and the restoration of traditional reconciliation mechanisms. The Darfur Regional Authority plans to incorporate the recommendations into its work.

11. The event went ahead, despite the fact that, on 24 March, 31 internally displaced persons were abducted from a UNAMID-escorted convoy by approximately 70 armed assailants in Arga (37 km north-west of Kass, Southern Darfur) while travelling from Zalingei to the conference. Despite efforts by the escort to stop the abduction, the internally displaced persons were separated from the convoy and taken to an undisclosed location. Government security forces prevented UNAMID reinforcements from proceeding to the scene of the incident. The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Abdul Wahid later claimed responsibility for the abduction. The International Committee for the Red Cross facilitated the release, on 30 March, of the internally displaced persons.

Other developments

12. On 5 January, representatives of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), several Sudanese opposition political parties and a number of civil society organizations adopted the New Dawn Charter at the conclusion of a five-day meeting in Kampala. The agreement provides for, inter alia, the establishment of a democratic secular State in the Sudan; a four-year period during which the country will be governed by a transitional administration; and the holding of general elections at the end of the transitional period. The ruling National Congress Party strongly denounced the Charter and those who signed it. Several signatory parties, including the National Umma Party and the Sudanese Communist Party, subsequently sought to distance themselves from the provision that refers to the overthrow of the Government through armed struggle.

13. Notwithstanding this development, the Joint Chief Mediator ad interim continued to engage the Government of the Sudan and the Darfur members of SRF to promote the resumption of negotiations. The parties remained, however, unable to identify common ground upon which to engage in talks.

III. Protection of civilians from physical violence

14. The risk to the civilian population of physical violence increased, in particular in parts of Northern, Central and Southern Darfur, owing to military clashes between Government and armed movement forces and intercommunal fighting involving militias. Intercommunal fighting, particularly in Northern Darfur over access to a gold mine, led to substantial population displacement.

15. Sporadic military clashes between Government and SLA-Abdul Wahid forces in Jebel Marra (Central Darfur), the latest round of which began in December 2012, continued in January and February and led to the displacement of an estimated 30,000 people. Multiple sources reported clashes between the parties near Golo and Guldo (35 km and 23 km north-east of Nertiti, Central Darfur, respectively) between 2 and 11 January. Community sources reported that the hostilities included aerial bombing by Sudanese Armed Forces aircraft. On 28 and 29 January, UNAMID observed additional Government forces aboard 140 military vehicles moving from Zalingei and Nertiti towards the scene of the clashes, following which renewed fighting reportedly took place around Golo on 4 and 5 February. By 6 February, the hostilities had subsided.

16. Reports of casualties varied widely and could not be verified by UNAMID owing to movement restrictions imposed by the belligerent parties. The Mission

airlifted aid to Nertiti for distribution by humanitarian agencies to the 17,000 people displaced to the town by the clashes (see paras. 38 and 39 for further details about the humanitarian situation). In addition, UNAMID called on the parties to refrain from hostilities and allow mission and humanitarian personnel full access to the areas affected by fighting.

17. In Southern Darfur, Government forces and non-signatory armed movements clashed sporadically in Beleil Locality (20 km south-east of Nyala) between mid-February and mid-March. According to community sources, on 13 February, the Sudanese Armed Forces attacked the villages of Kashalongo and Amguna (14 km south-east of Nyala) because of the suspected presence of armed movement elements. The following day, SLA-Minni Minawi reportedly attacked a Government police station and ambushed a Government military convoy near Um Gonia (30 km south of Nyala). Sudanese Armed Forces aircraft then conducted aerial bombing in the Derib al Reih area (35 km south-east of Nyala) on 20 and 21 February, during which a marketplace in Um Deita village (31 km south-east of Nyala) was reportedly struck. Community sources stated that 4 civilians (including 2 minors) were killed and 16 injured in the incident. Movement restrictions imposed by Government security officials prevented UNAMID from accessing the area to confirm the reports of casualties, which varied widely.

18. Further clashes took place between the parties near Um Gadati village (47 km south of Nyala) on 21 February. A lull in the fighting then ensued, until 13 March, at which time Popular Defence Forces and Central Reserve Police reportedly looted Kashalongo village and the market at Al Salam camp (30 km south-east of Nyala). Government forces and SLA-Minni Minawi then clashed near Um Gonia the following day. While the area remained tense, no further clashes were recorded.

19. While UNAMID was prevented from accessing the locations of the fighting owing to movement restrictions imposed by Government security forces, the Mission increased patrolling at camps to which people were displaced and called on the parties to immediately cease hostilities. Humanitarian agencies delivered aid to approximately 1,600 people displaced to Al Salam camp, 600 to Kalma camp (11 km east of Nyala) and 500 to Beleil camp (13 km east of Nyala).

20. A dispute over land ownership triggered fighting, on 28 February, between groups from the Beni Halba and Gimir tribes in Batikha village (95 km south-west of Ed El Fursan, Southern Darfur). Community sources informed UNAMID that 16 people were killed (11 Beni Halba and 5 Gimir) and 7 wounded in the clashes. Local authorities reported that the fighting displaced a total of 15,000 people. Of these, approximately 5,000 were reportedly displaced to Kateela (38 km south of Ed El Fursan) and 5,000 to Al Salam camp. Humanitarian organizations are working to verify reports of displacement to other locations. The authorities deployed additional forces to the area to stabilize the situation. Attempts by UNAMID to access the area were prevented by local security officials. While no further reports of fighting were recorded, the situation remained tense.

21. Two bouts of heavy intercommunal fighting between the Aballa and Beni Hussein militias in the Jebel Amir region (40 km north-west of Kabkabiya, Northern Darfur), in early January and towards the end of February, resulted in the displacement of an estimated 100,000 people. On 4 January, fighting broke out between militia drawn from the Aballa, a collection of camel herding nomadic tribes, and the Beni Hussein, a mainly cattle herding tribe, following a dispute over

access to an artisanal gold mine in Jebel Amir. Prior to the outbreak of violence, the mine was administered by the Beni Hussein. While UNAMID was unable to access the scene of the clashes owing to insecurity and movement restrictions imposed by the militias, local sources reported that approximately 100 people were killed and 25 villages destroyed in the fighting.

22. On 13 and 14 January, UNAMID transported state government officials to the towns of El Sireaf and Saraf Umra (85 km north-west and 95 km west of Kabkabiya, respectively), to defuse tensions between the parties. In addition, the Mission evacuated to El Fasher 26 civilians seriously injured in the clashes, airlifted humanitarian aid to the affected area, increased patrolling in locations to which civilians had been displaced and urged the militia leaders to cease hostilities.

23. On 17 January, peace talks in Saraf Umra, mediated by the Governor of Northern Darfur, led to the signing of a ceasefire agreement, according to which the parties committed to, inter alia, cease hostilities, stop mining activities in Jebel Amir until their dispute is resolved and participate in a reconciliation conference scheduled for 15 April. A similar agreement was signed on the same day in Um Dukhun (90 km south of Mukhjar, Central Darfur) between communities who participated in the fighting when it spread to that area. Sporadic, small-scale clashes between the militias continued, however, after the signing of the agreements.

24. Heavy fighting between the groups resumed, on 21 February, when Aballa militia attacked a checkpoint manned by the Beni Hussein at El Gehir (15 km west of El Sireaf). The fighting continued and spread, on 23 February, to El Sireaf town. Local sources placed the number of fatalities at approximately 80, with upwards of 100 wounded. Government authorities deployed additional Sudanese Armed Forces to the town to stabilize the situation and Government attack helicopters patrolled the area to deter further offensives by the Aballa. While there were no further reports of fighting after 23 February, the area remained tense.

25. Following the second outbreak of fighting, on 22 February, UNAMID deployed 60 peacekeepers from its team site in Saraf Umra to El Sireaf to contribute to the protection of civilians and secure a helicopter landing zone. UNAMID then airlifted, on 24 February, humanitarian aid to the town and evacuated 110 vulnerable civilians (including 37 seriously wounded). The peacekeepers established and continue to maintain a temporary operating base in El Sireaf, from which they are contributing to the protection of civilians and facilitating the safe delivery of aid.

26. On 1 March, representatives of the Aballa and Beni Hussein militias held a second reconciliation conference in Saraf Umra, again chaired by the Governor of Northern Darfur. That conference concluded with an agreement between the parties to cease hostilities, withdraw their blockades from the road between El Sireaf and Saraf Umra (which had been closed intermittently to private and commercial traffic since the fighting began and fully since 21 February) and adhere to the provisions of the ceasefire agreement of 17 January. The Government then formed, on 13 March, a joint reconciliation mechanism comprising representatives of the Northern, Central and Western Darfur State governments and civil society to promote peaceful relations between communities in Jebel Amir and in Kutum (an area that had witnessed clashes between militia and Government forces in August and September 2012).

IV. Security situation and freedom of movement

27. The Mission continued to experience restrictions of movement over land and by air, the majority of which were imposed by Government forces on movements into areas of ongoing or recently concluded hostilities. The restrictions of movement over land were mainly encountered during attempts to access Jebel Marra, Jebel Amir (Northern Darfur), Batikha (Southern Darfur) and Beleil Locality (Southern Darfur). Between 1 January and 26 March, Government authorities denied 75 of 4,846 flight requests, a slight decrease from 82 of 3,938 in the previous reporting period.

28. On 14 March, Government security forces surrounded and prevented a UNAMID helicopter from departing Tine (215 km north-west of El Fasher) after the crew refused an impromptu request from local authorities to transport four teachers who did not appear on the flight manifest. The helicopter was detained overnight after attempts by UNAMID to persuade the authorities to allow it to depart proved unsuccessful. The flight departed the following day without the teachers onboard after the matter was escalated to higher authorities. A similar incident in Saraf Umra on 20 March delayed the departure of a UNAMID flight by two hours. The Mission protested the restrictions and engaged the Darfur State governors to clarify the administrative procedures required for non-Mission personnel travelling on UNAMID flights. In addition, the Mission continued to urge all parties to the conflict to allow its personnel full and unhindered freedom of movement throughout Darfur.

29. Restrictions were also imposed on UNAMID civilian personnel. On 20 February, National Intelligence and Security Services officers denied UNAMID human rights personnel access to Kondobe (20 km north of El Geneina, Western Darfur) to investigate reports of sexual and gender-based violence. On 27 February, the Central Reserve Police prevented UNAMID human rights personnel from proceeding to Um Deita village (31 km south-east of Nyala) to investigate reports of aerial bombing on 21 February. Furthermore, insecurity and restrictions of movement imposed by the authorities hindered investigations into human rights violations in Jebel Marra and Jebel Amir.

30. While humanitarian organizations were able to deliver aid to most people in need of assistance, access to the population in conflict-affected areas and areas controlled by armed movements was challenging because of adverse security conditions and intermittent restrictions imposed by the belligerent parties. With the exception of Nertiti township, the Jebel Marra area remained inaccessible to humanitarian actors throughout the reporting period due to restrictions imposed by the authorities.

Safety and security

31. The safety and security situation for UNAMID and humanitarian personnel in Darfur remained of serious concern. On 26 February, a UNAMID patrol was stopped and surrounded by approximately 100 unidentified armed movement soldiers in Zalata (20 km south-east of Nyala). Patrol members refused the movement commander's demands that they hand over vehicles and arms. Following negotiations amid a tense stand off, the patrol withdrew from the situation and returned safely to base. No personnel were injured during the incident.

32. On 20 March, approximately 13 unidentified armed assailants fired at UNAMID peacekeepers guarding a water point in Ed El Fursan (Southern Darfur). The peacekeepers repelled the attackers by returning fire. No casualties were recorded.

33. On 12 January, 7 unidentified armed men kidnapped 4 international commercial contractors and 11 Sudanese nationals working on a road construction project near Kuma village (90 km north-east of El Fasher). Four days later, a community leader presented the international contractors, whom the kidnappers released near Khor Abeche camp (75 km north-east of Nyala), to the nearby UNAMID team site. The Mission provided assistance to the contractors, including medical treatment to one for a gunshot wound suffered during the initial stages of the kidnapping, and safely handed them over to their national authorities. The Sudanese nationals were released unharmed near Thabit (45 km south-east of El Fasher, Northern Darfur) five weeks later.

34. On 13 January, National Intelligence and Security Services officers arrested a national staff member of an international non-governmental organization in Zalingei, Central Darfur, for alleged involvement in arson and an unlawful public demonstration. The staff member was released unharmed and without charge later the same day. On 20 January, national security officers arrested one international and two national UNAMID staff members in El Fasher, who were working on a local community story for the Mission's periodical. The staff members were interrogated before being released without charge after three hours. On 8 February, Government police arrested a national UNAMID staff member in Nertiti, Central Darfur, allegedly in connection with a local land dispute. That staff member was released unharmed and without charge on 9 February. UNAMID intervened to secure the release of the staff members and called on the authorities to ensure that the provisions of the status-of-forces agreement are strictly observed.

35. On 22 January, National Intelligence and Security Services officers released three national UNAMID staff members arrested in Nyala, on 24 and 25 December 2012, for alleged involvement in seditious activities. After repeated calls from UNAMID for the authorities to release the staff members, they reported that there was insufficient evidence to bring the case to trial.

36. Two UNAMID and four international non-governmental organization vehicles were carjacked during the reporting period (compared to two vehicles carjacked during the previous reporting period). Government security authorities later recovered the UNAMID vehicle and one of the international non-governmental organization vehicles.

V. Humanitarian situation

37. During the reporting period, the need for humanitarian assistance increased significantly in and around areas affected by military clashes and heavy intercommunal fighting, in particular in Jebel Marra and Jebel Amir. Altogether, the fighting displaced an estimated 147,000 people.

38. According to Government estimates, approximately 30,000 people were displaced by the clashes in Jebel Marra between late December and mid-February. Of those, aid agencies verified and provided assistance to 17,000 newly displaced

persons in Nertiti; 3,700 at Nivasha camp (near Shangil Tobaya, Northern Darfur); and 420 at Argo and Dali camps (near Tawilla, Northern Darfur). The aid included food assistance and emergency shelter; health care provided through pre-existing clinics; and, in Nertiti, education materials to enable 2,600 displaced students to sit for school examinations. The Government Water and Environmental Sanitation Department, in conjunction with aid agencies, provided water and sanitation services.

39. Approximately 100,000 people were displaced by the intercommunal fighting between the Aballa and Beni Hussein militias in January and late February. According to the Government Humanitarian Aid Commission, most were displaced within El Sireaf Locality, including 65,000 to El Sireaf town and 7,000 to Garra Az Azawia (30 km north-west of Kabkabiya). An additional 7,000 were displaced to Kabkabiya and approximately 2,000 to Saraf Umra. The fluid security situation meant that groups of displaced persons moved between the above-mentioned locations in response to developments in the conflict. In addition, humanitarian agencies provided aid to approximately 3,700 people displaced further afield to Bulbul Abu Jazo (43 km south-west of Nyala) and 1,500 displaced to Zalingei.

40. UNAMID and humanitarian agencies transported by road and air 700 metric tonnes of aid to the newly displaced, including food assistance, emergency shelter, blankets, medical supplies and water purification and sanitation equipment. The Ministry of Health and United Nations partners provided health-care services through pre-existing clinics. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations vaccinated displaced persons' livestock and distributed veterinary supplies.

41. Clashes between Government and armed movement forces in Beliel Locality, Southern Darfur, between mid-February and mid-March and intercommunal fighting in Batikha, Southern Darfur, in late February (see paras. 17-20) resulted in the displacement of an estimated 2,700 and 15,000 people, respectively.

42. Prior to the above-mentioned displacements, the return and reintegration working group, led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), confirmed that the total number of people verified as having voluntarily returned to their original areas in 2012 was 109,211 (91,554 internally displaced persons and 17,657 refugees).

43. Government authorities and humanitarian agencies continued to implement an emergency mass vaccination campaign to contain an outbreak of yellow fever that began in Darfur in early September 2012. According to the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization, 849 cases, which include 171 fatalities, were recorded between 2 September 2012 and 9 January 2013. A total of 35 out of 57 localities throughout Darfur were affected. Following completion of the first phase of the campaign in December 2012, during which 2.2 million people in 11 localities were vaccinated, a total of 1.1 million people in six localities were vaccinated in January under the second phase. The third phase, in which 2.16 million were vaccinated, was undertaken in February. While Ministry of Health officials are yet to officially declare the region free of yellow fever, the campaign has been effective in largely containing the outbreak.

VI. Rule of law, governance and human rights

44. The overall number of human rights violations recorded by UNAMID increased from 94 cases involving 204 victims in the previous reporting period to 117 cases involving 347 victims in the current reporting period (125 victims of violations of the right to life, 176 victims of violations of the right to physical integrity, 38 victims of sexual and gender-based violence and 8 victims of arbitrary arrest and detention).

45. Attacks on civilians continued, resulting mostly in violations of the right to physical integrity. UNAMID recorded 49 incidents involving 176 victims, as compared to 37 incidents involving 100 victims in the previous reporting period. Of these, 22 incidents involving 68 victims resulted from armed clashes between Government forces and armed movements or from Sudanese Armed Forces aerial attacks. The remaining 27 incidents involving 108 victims related to intercommunal clashes or armed attacks on civilians during acts of banditry perpetrated by unidentified armed men. Although the incidents of banditry were reported to the police, according to information obtained from the victims and police, none were investigated. UNAMID continued to urge the authorities to identify and hold the perpetrators of such attacks accountable.

46. In an effort to encourage peaceful relations between nomadic pastoralist and farming communities, UNAMID facilitated 29 reconciliation meetings throughout Darfur to promote intercommunal dialogue. In addition, the Mission facilitated nine workshops on peaceful relations between pastoralist and farming communities for a total of 300 participants. Workshop participants jointly identified triggers of intercommunal conflict and, in this regard, recommended establishing crop protection committees well before the beginning of the harvesting season; involving local communities in the selection of committee members; and empowering the committees in terms of authority and resources. UNAMID worked with the local authorities and community leaders to implement the recommendations.

47. UNAMID recorded 6 incidents of arbitrary arrest and detention involving 8 victims during the reporting period, as compared to 6 incidents involving 13 victims in the previous period. In Southern Darfur, four people who were detained by the National Intelligence and Security Services for two months in connection with public demonstrations in Nyala in late July 2012 were re-arrested on 19 January 2013. While the authorities released one of the victims the following day, the status of the remaining three victims is unknown because of denial of access. On 1 March, National Intelligence and Security Services officers released without charge a victim detained for unspecified reasons in Nyala for five months. In Western Darfur, on 12 March, National Intelligence and Security Services officers arrested a civilian in El Geneina, allegedly because of his association with an opposition political party. The victim was interrogated before being released without charge after six hours. Fear of reprisals by the authorities appears to have contributed to the underreporting of such violations by victims and other community members.

48. UNAMID recorded 22 incidents of sexual and gender-based violence involving 38 victims, four of whom were minors. This is a decrease from 33 incidents involving 47 victims, 20 of whom were minors, in the previous reporting period. A total of 16 cases involving 28 victims (one of whom was a minor) were rape incidents and three incidents involving 7 victims were attempted

rape incidents. Incidents involving gang rape accounted for three cases involving three victims (two of whom were minors). Only 13 out of the 22 incidents have been confirmed as being under investigation by the authorities (11 rape cases and 2 gang rape incidents).

49. Advocacy and capacity-building efforts by UNAMID, the United Nations country team, State officials and civil society organizations notwithstanding, the underreporting of such incidents by victims and other community members remained a challenge. In an effort to address this concern, UNAMID conducted workshops on sexual and gender-based violence and other gender issues for a total of 197 local government and civil society representatives throughout Darfur. Furthermore, the Mission, in conjunction with women's civil society groups, marked International Women's Day by holding gender-awareness-raising forums for approximately 3,000 local government, political party and civil society representatives in each of the Darfur State capitals between 7 and 14 March.

50. Regarding freedom of speech, expression and information, UNAMID recorded three cases involving the harassment and intimidation by Government authorities of civilians involved in public demonstrations. This included the reported surveillance by Government security agencies of university students who participated in demonstrations in Nyala in July and August 2012. On 2 March, however, a peaceful protest by traders about insecurity in Nyala following the abduction, two days earlier, of a fellow trader by unidentified assailants took place without interference.

51. Holding perpetrators of human rights violations accountable remained a challenge, owing, inter alia, to resource constraints within the justice system and legislation that provides immunity from prosecution to security personnel for actions undertaken in the course of performing their duties. Of the 117 human rights cases documented by UNAMID during the reporting period, 42 were reported to Government authorities, 8 of which are under investigation. On 26 February, the National Intelligence and Security Services initiated an internal trial of an officer alleged to have killed a civilian during protests in Nyala on 29 July 2012. The victim was reportedly working inside a house at the time of the incident. The trial is ongoing.

52. In an effort to build the capacity of the corrections system, UNAMID, in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme, provided training in prison duties and international standards of treatment of prisoners for a total of 30 prison staff in El Fasher on 13 January and 3 February. To enhance law and order, UNAMID delivered training to 277 community policing volunteers and held short courses in criminal investigations for 120 Government police.

Child protection

53. On 3 January, UNAMID delivered training on children's rights to 17 SLA-Historical Leadership commanders in Kass and Shattaya (80 km north-west and 105 km west of Nyala, respectively). The movement's leaders then registered for reintegration, in conjunction with UNAMID, United Nations agencies and local authorities, a total of 74 former child soldiers, including 24 girls, in the two towns between 17 and 27 January. The Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, supported by United Nations agencies, plans to facilitate the reintegration of the children into communities. On 6 February, the movement

submitted to UNAMID its final progress report on the implementation of its action plan to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

54. Further to the implementation of its action plan, JEM-Gibril Ibrahim informed UNAMID, on 24 February, that it had identified and demobilized from within its ranks 10 children in areas under its control. Discussions are ongoing between the movement, UNAMID and other United Nations agencies about arrangements for the children to be handed over safely for reintegration.

VII. UNAMID deployment and operations

55. As at 25 March 2013, the strength of UNAMID civilian personnel stood at 85 per cent of the approved strength of 5,277 (2,932 national staff, 1,093 international staff and 448 United Nations Volunteers).

56. The strength of UNAMID military personnel stood at 15,237, including 14,601 troops, 319 staff officers, 244 military observers and 73 liaison officers.

57. The number of UNAMID individual police officers stood at 2,635, comprising 84 per cent men and 16 per cent women. This included a sufficient number of Arabic-speaking officers to enable the Mission to ensure the presence of at least one officer with such skills on every UNAMID police patrol and team site shift duty. Of the authorized 17 formed police units, 16 have been deployed.

58. During the reporting period, UNAMID military personnel conducted 12,676 patrols, including 5,869 routine patrols, 2,898 administrative patrols, 1,979 night patrols, 899 humanitarian escorts, 695 short-range patrols and 336 long-range patrols. UNAMID police personnel conducted a total of 15,972 patrols, including 11,196 inside camps for internally displaced persons, 3,130 in villages, towns and markets, 1,216 medium-range patrols, 257 long-range patrols and 173 firewood and farm patrols.

59. From 1 January to 23 March 2013, the Sudanese authorities issued 533 new entry visas for UNAMID personnel. As at 23 March, 1,402 visas were pending, 967 of which were for civilian police officers, 393 for civilian personnel and 42 for military personnel. UNAMID continued to urge the authorities to approve all visa requests promptly.

60. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2063 (2012), the implementation of the results of the review of UNAMID uniformed personnel continued. The repatriation of a multi-role logistics company, two infantry battalions, a signal company and a reconnaissance company was completed. While adjustments continued to be made to police contingents, significant delays in the issuance of visas for incoming police personnel have made it necessary to extend the tour of duty of some police currently serving in the Mission in order to maintain the trajectory towards right-sizing of the police component. Reductions in the Mission's overall troop and police strength are scheduled to reach the authorized ceilings by 1 September 2013 and 31 January 2014, respectively. The internal reconfiguration of troop and police contingents, whereby forces are concentrated in areas where threats to the protection of civilians are greatest, is under way.

61. Regarding the operational and self-sustainment capabilities of troop and police contingents, out of the 45 military and police units currently deployed to UNAMID,

16 have achieved a major equipment serviceability rate above the 90 per cent threshold. Conversely, the serviceability rate of some units has declined, with nine units below 65 per cent. In the area of self-sustainment capabilities, only 13 units fully meet the requirements stipulated in the relevant memorandums of understanding. The remainder are lacking some self-sustainment capabilities and are partially supported by the Mission. These shortfalls, which pertain mainly to the serviceability of armoured personnel carriers, continue to adversely affect operations. Some troop- and police-contributing countries took steps during the reporting period to address these shortfalls in self-sustainment by deploying equipment and by resupplying spare parts and consumables. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continued to engage with troop- and police-contributing countries to encourage them to swiftly address shortcomings in contingent-owned equipment.

62. A technical-level meeting of the tripartite coordination mechanism between UNAMID and the Government of the Sudan was held in Khartoum on 25 February. Participants discussed, among other issues, freedom of movement for UNAMID personnel, outstanding visa requests and delays in the issuing of customs clearances for UNAMID cargo. Participants representing the Government stated that significant progress will be made on issuing visas prior to the next meeting of the tripartite mechanism. They urged UNAMID to coordinate closely with officials of the National Intelligence and Security Services in Darfur to address access restrictions and advised that the issue of customs clearance delays would be taken up with customs officials. The next tripartite mechanism meeting between the African Union, the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations is planned for 15 April in Addis Ababa.

63. During the reporting period, a total of 43 quick-impact projects were completed; 65 additional projects are ongoing and at various stages of completion.

64. UNAMID and local partners continued to implement community-based labour intensive projects for youth assessed as at risk of joining armed groups or gangs. A total of 14 projects were concluded during the reporting period, leaving three projects ongoing. The Mission, the United Nations Development Programme and local partners approved for implementation throughout Darfur 11 new projects related to on-the-job training in infrastructure construction and agriculture. Implementation of these projects is scheduled to begin in April.

65. UNAMID continued to reduce the threat posed by unexploded ordnance in Darfur. A total 1,796 km of roads and pathways and 211 km^2 of land were assessed as free of unexploded ordnance. In addition, UNAMID delivered unexploded ordnance risk education training to 26,955 civilians (23 per cent of whom were women and 57 per cent of whom were children).

66. No progress was made during the reporting period towards securing the issuance by the Sudanese authorities of a radio broadcasting licence for UNAMID. The Mission continued to broadcast one-hour-long shows twice daily through short-wave frequency and by State FM radio stations in Nyala and El Fasher.

VIII. Progress against benchmarks

67. Paragraphs 68 to 71 of the report contain an assessment of developments against the updated benchmarks and indicators set out in my report of 16 October 2012 (S/2012/771, annex I).

68. As reported earlier, some progress was made towards achieving a comprehensive and inclusive settlement to the Darfur conflict. The steps taken to implement the Doha Document were focused mainly on the transfer of 800 million Sudanese pounds (US$ 165 million) to the Darfur Regional Authority for reconstruction and development and the holding of a Darfur donor conference. Only limited progress was made in the implementation of the majority of the provisions, however, with little or no movement recorded with respect to the provisions on land, security, reconciliation or compensation. Regarding the inclusiveness of the peace process, negotiations between the Government and JEM-Sudan led to the signing by the parties of an agreement to adopt the Doha Document. No progress was made on the resumption of negotiations between the Government and the Darfur members of the Sudan Revolutionary Front alliance. Moreover, fighting between these parties continued.

69. The second benchmark relates to the restoration of a stable and secure environment throughout Darfur. Increased hostilities between Government and non-signatory armed movement forces and heavy intercommunal fighting involving militias in Northern, Central and Southern Darfur seriously undermined progress against this benchmark. The absence of a comprehensive and inclusive ceasefire between all parties to the conflict continued to pose a significant impediment to progress. Movement restrictions imposed on UNAMID by the belligerent parties frequently constrained access to areas affected by the fighting. Nevertheless, the Mission contributed to the protection of civilians and facilitated the delivery of aid in locations to which people were displaced, supported reconciliation efforts and engaged armed groups to call for a ceasefire and unhindered access.

70. The third benchmark pertains to strengthening the rule of law, governance and human rights protections. The human rights situation in Darfur deteriorated in a manner commensurate with the intensification of conflict, in particular with regard to violations of the rights to life and physical integrity. Notwithstanding the work of the Special Prosecutor for Darfur, the lack of accountability for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law remained a serious concern. UNAMID continued to work with the authorities and civil society to build their capacity to protect human rights, uphold the rule of law and govern effectively. While opportunities for future progress may arise from the Mission's work on intercommunal reconciliation, progress during the present reporting period was limited.

71. The fourth benchmark refers to stabilizing the humanitarian situation and facilitating the delivery of aid. Military clashes between Government and armed movement forces and heavy intercommunal conflict significantly increased the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance. The number of people newly displaced also increased substantially. Adverse security conditions and intermittent access restrictions imposed on aid agencies by belligerent parties impeded humanitarian needs assessments and the provision of aid in areas affected by

fighting. The combination of these factors resulted in substantial regression against this benchmark.

IX. Financial aspects

72. The General Assembly, by its resolution 66/279 of 21 June 2012, appropriated the amount of $1,448.6 million for the maintenance of the Operation for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

73. As at 20 March 2013, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNAMID Special Account amount to $304.0 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amount to $2,318.5 million.

74. As at 20 March 2013, reimbursement of troop-contributing Governments for troop and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made for the period to 31 January 2013 and 31 December 2012, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

X. Observations

75. Ten years since the Darfur conflict first seized the international community's attention, a comprehensive political settlement is yet to be reached and bouts of heavy fighting have continued. The signing, in July 2011, of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur by the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement presented an opportunity, if implemented faithfully, to address the causes of the conflict and lay the foundations for peace. Twenty-one months since its adoption, however, it has yet to become fully inclusive or translate into meaningful and tangible improvements for the people of Darfur.

76. Several of the institutions provided for in the agreement have been established, including the Darfur Regional Authority and its associated bodies. However, they still require greater capacity and resources to be able to function effectively. I take note, in this regard, of the letter of credit for 800 million Sudanese pounds (US$ 165 million) sent by the authorities to the Darfur Regional Authority in January 2013 for reconstruction and development. I encourage the Government to continue to provide resources and support to the Darfur Regional Authority and to do so on a regular and predictable basis so as to enable the body to effectively fulfil its mandate.

77. I appreciate that the continuing economic challenges facing the Sudan have contributed to the slow implementation of the Doha agreement. The adoption, on 12 March 2013, of the implementation matrix for the 27 September cooperation agreements between the Sudan and South Sudan, provides an opportunity to address these challenges by enabling the resumption of oil production and trade between both countries. However, in order for any improvement in the Sudan's fiscal situation to translate into progress in the Darfur peace process, the adoption of the implementation matrix will need to be matched by political will and resources. I urge the Government and the Liberation and Justice Movement to demonstrate their commitment in this regard by redoubling their efforts to fully implement the provisions of the Doha Document, including by moving forward on the ceasefire and final security arrangements.

78. I take note of the pledges made at the Darfur donor conference in Doha on 7 and 8 April, which will provide additional resources for recovery, development and poverty eradication in Darfur. I encourage donors and the Government to swiftly deliver on their commitments towards Darfur's recovery and development in accordance with the Darfur Development Strategy. Implementation of these activities is dependent on progress being made in the establishment of an enabling environment. I encourage the Government and the Darfur Regional Authority to work towards this and ensure that recovery and development is promoted in a manner that prioritizes the needs of conflict-affected and vulnerable communities throughout Darfur.

79. For the support pledged at the donor conference to lead to tangible progress on the ground, implementing agencies and UNAMID will require full and unhindered access throughout Darfur to carry out their mandates. In this connection, I am seriously concerned about the impediments to their work that UNAMID, the United Nations country team and other international partners continue to experience, which include delays in the issuance of visas, denials of access and restrictions of movement. Such impediments undermine the ability of the Mission and agencies to effectively assist the Darfuri people. I call on all parties to the conflict to refrain from impeding the work of UNAMID, as well as humanitarian actors and development agencies operating in Darfur.

80. Achieving a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the conflict requires that the belligerent parties forsake violence and instead engage each other in dialogue. In this connection, the progress made in the negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan, a faction of the Justice and Equality Movement led by Mohamed Bashar, is most welcome. I reiterate my call to the Government and the remaining non-signatory armed movements, in particular the Darfuri members of the Sudan Revolutionary Front alliance, to immediately cease hostilities and engage without preconditions in talks aimed at reaching a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

81. The participation of Darfuri stakeholders in consultations to increase local ownership and the inclusiveness of the peace process is also key to achieving a lasting settlement. Participants must be able to move safely to and from such events without fear of harm or interference. The abduction by armed assailants of 31 internally displaced persons from a UNAMID-escorted convoy travelling to a conference on the peace process is deeply troubling. While I am relieved that the abductees were released on 30 March, I strongly condemn those responsible for the incident. I call on the belligerent parties to establish an enabling environment throughout Darfur within which such consultations can take place safely and freely. It is also vital that UNAMID military and police contingents, which encounter considerable challenges and risks on the ground on a daily basis, are equipped and trained for the tasks at hand.

82. Regrettably the intensification of conflict that I highlighted in my previous report to the Security Council (S/2013/22), which started when violence involving militia groups broke out in Kutum and Mellit (Northern Darfur) in August 2012, has continued and indeed worsened. This year, several incidents of fighting between Government and armed movement forces and heavy intercommunal clashes between militia groups have resulted in yet more civilian casualties, the destruction of property and the displacement of an estimated 147,000 people. I find it disturbing

that significantly more people were displaced by clashes in the first three months of this year than during all of 2012.

83. Heightened competition between communities in Darfur over limited resources owing, at least in part, to the economic challenges facing the Sudan is one factor that has contributed to the intensification of violence. Other factors include the prevalence of arms among the civilian population, an absence of accountability for violent crimes and prevailing mistrust between communities. The hoped-for improvements in the Sudan's economic situation may help alleviate a source of resource-based conflict. Equitably managed access to land and other natural resources will nevertheless remain an essential element of sustainable peace in Darfur, as will strengthened rule of law, the disarmament of militia groups and reconciliation between communities. I call on the Government to address these issues in the course of exercising its responsibility to protect civilians. Moreover, I urge all parties to the conflict to ensure that the protections afforded to civilians under international humanitarian law are respected.

84. I remain deeply concerned about the impact of the prevailing security situation in Darfur on the safety and security of UNAMID and humanitarian personnel. I condemn those responsible for the armed attack on UNAMID peacekeepers in Ed El Fursan, Southern Darfur. I call on the authorities to address the climate of impunity for such attacks by investigating the incident and holding those responsible criminally accountable.

85. The arrest and detention by security officials of five UNAMID staff members in three separate incidents, in violation of the status-of-forces agreement, is also deeply troubling. While I note that all of the staff members, as well as three national UNAMID staff members detained on 24 December for 30 days, were released, such violations of the privileges and immunities afforded to UNAMID personnel are unacceptable. I strongly urge the Government to strictly adhere to the terms of the status-of-forces agreement and allow Mission personnel to implement the mandate of the Mission unimpeded.

86. In conclusion, I would like to thank the acting Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator ad interim, Aichatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, for her leadership of the Mission and the mediation process. I would also like to express my appreciation for the work of the women and men of UNAMID. The outgoing Force Commander, Lieutenant General Patrick Nyamvumba, in particular deserves praise for his dedicated service over the past three and a half years. I am also grateful for the efforts of the humanitarian personnel working to sustain and improve the lives of Darfuris affected by conflict.

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General Assembly
Security Council

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11 April 2013
English
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General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session
Agenda item 54
Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 11 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

In yet another violation of their commitments under the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement, on 2 April 2013 at 9.15 p.m., the Israeli occupation forces targeted a Syrian military position in the village of Bi'r Ajam, Qunaytirah governorate. They launched two mortar shells from the occupied position of Tall Abu al-Dhahab, which were followed by several 23-millimetre-calibre machine gun salvos, killing three soldiers and wounding another.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic demands an end to those provocative Israeli acts of aggression, which followed a similar Israeli attack on 18 November 2012. Israel must be prevailed upon to comply with the 1974 Agreement in order to counteract the growing risk of tension, escalation and confrontation in the area.

The Syrian Arab Republic recalls that those practices, which coincide with Israel's provision of direct support to the armed terrorist groups deployed in the area of disengagement, raises further legitimate questions regarding the extent of Israel's commitment to the Agreement and the preservation of peace and security in the area and the Middle East as a whole.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 54, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations

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General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session
Agenda item 105
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 11 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

On 7 April 2013, websites associated with the Al-Qaida organization posted an audio recording in which the leader of the organization, Aiman al-Zawahiri, addressed the armed men in Syria, saying, "the fruit of your jihad should be an Islamic State waging jihad, which would be a building block for the return of the righteous Caliphate". His statement urged them to "rally around the watchword of the one God and to struggle in the path of God in order for His law to prevail".

Al-Zawahiri's call met with a swift response from Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Al-Qaida organization in Iraq, "Organization for an Islamic State in Iraq". On 9 April 2013, he said, "the Nusrah Front is fighting to build an Islamic State in Syria", and made the following revelation: "the Nusrah Front is only an extension and a part of Islamic State of Iraq". He stated that the leader of the Nusrah Front, the Al-Qaida operative Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, had been sent with several combatants to fight in the Levant. In his audio message, which was posted on the websites of terrorist organizations, Al-Baghdadi announced that the organization Islamic State of Iraq had merged with the Nusrah Front to form an organization named Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

On 10 April, websites associated with terrorist organizations disseminated an audio recording of the manager of the Nusrah Front in Iraq and the Levant, Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, in which he announced, "the sons of the Nusrah Front and their manager swear allegiance to the shaykh of jihad Aiman al-Zawahiri and are at his command".

These statements from the leadership of the Al-Qaida organization underscore the concerns raised by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in numerous letters to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the

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Security Council, namely, that the activities of the armed terrorist groups are connected with the Al-Qaida organization; that their crimes in Syria represent a threat; that the organization Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant, an Al-Qaida affiliate, controls those criminal activities; and that their shedding of Syrian blood is motivated by obscurantist ideology and *takfirist* fatwas, which exonerate the actions of the group and of allied extremist groups known as the Islamic Battalions.

Although the terrorist organizations' attacks have been documented in letters from the Syrian Government to the United Nations, certain States have prevented the Security Council from condemning the numerous terrorist crimes for which the Nusrah Front has claimed responsibility. In so doing, they have created an incentive for the terrorists to persist in targeting Syrian civilians with suicide bombings and random mortar fire. In keeping with Al-Qaida's terrorist tactics elsewhere, the attacks have not spared residential buildings, hospitals, Islamic and Christian places of worship, or State institutions that provide services and education.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its warnings of the risk that the international community courts by disregarding the *takfirist* terrorist crimes that are linked to Al-Qaida and carried out by the Nusrah Front and its allies from the Islamic Battalions, as well as by the so-called Free Syrian Army, many components of which recently announced their allegiance to the Nusrah Front, and by ignoring the fact that numerous States, within and outside the region, including, most prominently, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Turkey, are contravening their legal undertakings in respect of counter-terrorism and, in particular, Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), by providing material and logistical support, arms and training, and by harbouring those terrorist groups. Such disregard will promote the spread of terrorism within and beyond the whole Middle Eastern region and will be responsible for the escalation of the activities of terrorist groups allied to Al-Qaida, which does not recognize State borders as an impediment to its terrorist crimes.

The Syrian Arab Republic, having completed the requisite procedures, has submitted a request for the Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant to be included on the Consolidated List established and maintained by the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) with respect to individuals, groups, undertakings and other entities associated with Al-Qaida. The Syrian Government hopes that measures will be taken forthwith in response to its request and that the Security Council will play the role with which it is entrusted, namely, to uphold international peace and security, by bringing pressure to bear on the States that are supporting terrorism in Syria to end those illegal practices and cease their attempts in regional and international organizations to impose decisions that are designed to disguise their activities in support of terrorism. The final report issued by the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) concerning Libya includes information on the illicit transfer of arms to Syria in order to support the armed terrorist groups there, using various networks and paths, including through Turkey and northern Lebanon, and refers to such specific events as the seizure in the Lebanese port of Tripoli of the vessel *Lutfalla 2*, to the vessel *Al-Intisar*, the circumstances of which are referred to in the aforementioned report, and the role of the Government of Turkey in providing legal cover. It provides new indications as to the involvement of such States as Qatar, Libya and Turkey in financing and facilitating the passage of arms shipments destined for terrorist groups inside Syria. Furthermore, there have been many reports by the international media on successive flights to a neighbouring country, with the aim of transferring to the terrorists

sophisticated weapons that are funded by Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Those weapons have recently been seen to be delivered to the terrorist organizations, particularly in the southern governorate of Dar'a.

The Syrian Government, in bringing these facts to the attention of the Security Council, asks it to shoulder its responsibilities, in accordance with the counter-terrorism-related Security Council resolutions, and demand that the States that are involved in supporting terrorism in Syria should cease their infractions, which imperil security and peace in Syria, the whole region and the world.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 105, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations